



WILLIAM T FUJIOKA  
Chief Executive Officer

## County of Los Angeles CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICE

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September 3, 2009

To: All Department Heads

From: William T Fujioka  
Chief Executive Officer

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be "W. T. Fujioka", is written over the printed name and title.

Board of Supervisors  
GLORIA MOLINA  
First District

MARK RIDLEY-THOMAS  
Second District

ZEV YAROSLAVSKY  
Third District

DON KNABE  
Fourth District

MICHAEL D. ANTONOVICH  
Fifth District

### GUIDELINES FOR DEVELOPMENT OF DEPARTMENTAL STRATEGIC PLANS

In July 2009, the Citizens' Economy and Efficiency Commission (Commission) reviewed the County Strategic Planning Process, stating that:

*"...the Commission concluded the strategic planning process has proven to be valuable and determined that the County has made solid year one progress including significantly stronger commitment to collaboration."*

While this comment recognizes the collaborative value of the strategic planning process, the Commission observed some areas where added effort could continue this progress. Included among its recommendations, the Commission proposed that "the Board consider directing the CEO to review the effect of the centralized County Strategic Plan on Departmental level strategic planning."

This memorandum provides general guidance to departments on how to link department strategic planning efforts to the County Strategic Plan and suggestions for aligning department planning efforts with MAPP goals. It is expected that each County department will develop a plan that identifies how it will support implementation of the County Strategic Plan, as well as fulfill its own departmental mandate. The guidelines are intended to collectively move the County forward in a consistent, integrated approach to strategic plan development, implementation, and evaluation of results.

#### Strategic Plan Elements

The structure for department strategic plans should follow the County's model and include the following elements:

- **Mission Statement:** An overarching, timeless expression of the purpose and aspiration, addressing both what is intended to be accomplished and the manner for accomplishing it. The County Mission's Statement is:

*"To enrich lives through effective and caring service."*

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Each County department should have a mission statement identifying the core of why it exists and its fundamental purpose within the overall County mission. Each department plays a critical role in fulfilling the County's mission. Some County departments have adopted or tailored the County's Mission Statement to their specific functions or services.

- **Values:** Values are shared attributes and behaviors that inform and guide the County's action in delivering services. The County has adopted nine values and specific defining statements regarding how these behaviors apply to the daily interactions of staff, customers, and the public. The nine County values should serve as a starting point for the development of any department-specific value statements.

In developing strategic plans, departments should review and, as necessary, build upon the defined values. While all County employees are expected to behave consistent with the adopted values, some departments may believe it necessary to create additional values or tailor the values to reflect the specific nature of their work. For example, some departments may believe it is important to tailor the definition of professionalism or integrity to reflect the confidentiality or compliance elements inherent in their work.

- **Goals (and Goal Statements):** In the County Strategic Plan, goals identify the major service or programmatic areas where the County will focus its strategic efforts. Goal statements for the County reflect broad, long-range "visions" for a significant area of the County's operations. A fundamental tenet in the County's Strategic Plan has been that the County best serves its clients and is most effective through integrated service delivery. Therefore, goal statements reflect the collective outcome intended for a service area and are not specifically linked to one department's efforts. Accordingly, achievement of a goal will require the integrated efforts of many County departments.

The corollary to this is that not all County services will be specifically linked to one of the County Strategic Plan Goals. Given the diversity of the County services, departments may not necessarily see a direct link of their services to the five County goals, but all departments are expected to identify how their work can support the County's mission and goals.

Departmental goals define the specific ways in which a department will achieve its mission. The goal statements should reflect how the department will support a specific County goal and/or department specific operations. For example, the Department of Children and Family Services has a clear connection to County Strategic Plan Goal 2: Children and Families' Well-Being, but will likely have department-specific goals that relate to how it fulfills its mission and operates in compliance with State and Federal mandates.

- **Strategies:** Strategies reflect the "how" of strategic plans and identify at a high-level how the goal will be accomplished. In the County Strategic Plan, strategies translate goals into ways they will be accomplished over a three to five year planning horizon. Similar to goals, strategies are written to reflect cross-departmental efforts.

- **Objectives:** Objectives are the specific steps, or action plans, on how to accomplish and define specific timelines for completion. Objectives are reviewed regularly and updated annually.

Taken together, strategies and objectives define the specific ways that goals will be accomplished. Objectives are most likely to identify department-specific expectations and departments should ensure that their strategic plan reflects and incorporates these identified strategies and objectives. Strategic plans should be viewed as cascading in detail. A single strategy or objective at the County level may be broken into multiple strategies or objectives at the department level.

### **Guidelines for Developing Department Strategic Plans**

Departments have broad flexibility in how they develop strategic plans. Processes can be as broad or inclusive as time and resources permit. The following provides general guidance for consideration:

- ✓ *A key step in any strategic planning should be an “**environmental scan**” which means assessing the current and anticipated future environment. This environmental scan should include an in-depth review of the County Strategic Plan to evaluate what County priorities should impact department operations and how the priorities should be reflected in department planning efforts. Additionally, departments are encouraged to solicit the input of the Deputy Chief Executive Officer and/or CEO staff within their cluster as part of the process of identifying critical strategic issues.*
- ✓ *Plans should be developed with the **input of key staff and management**. The County Strategic Plan is developed through the active input of Board offices, department heads, chief deputies, and other staff. Plans should reflect the input of the staff at all levels, customers, and others that vested in the success of the organization and driven by the leadership of the department.*
- ✓ *Plans should be **updated and reviewed regularly**. The County Strategic Plan is minimally reviewed every six months at County conferences that review progress and recalibrate priorities based on current policy demands, fiscal constraints, and other operational challenges. To be in sync with County efforts and changes within a department’s operations and environment, department strategic plans should be regularly monitored and updated.*
- ✓ *Plans should be used as a **vehicle to communicate priorities and enroll support for implementation**. Strategic plans are effective when they communicate the priorities of an organization and provide a way to engage partners, clients and other stakeholders in the achievement of the priorities. Departments should use plans to communicate to the Board and CEO and build support for the accomplishment. Per Board Order of April 10, 2001, a draft copy of the department’s strategic plan must be shared with the Board offices for their review prior to implementation.*

- ✓ *Plans should be **linked to MAPP performance targets**.* The County's Management Appraisal and Performance Plan (MAPP) process identifies performance expectations for individual managers and department heads. In the same manner that plans should be developed collaboratively with the input and engagement of all, individual MAPP plans should be developed with the sharing and review of all key managers. The CEO has promoted transparency and collaboration among department heads by annually developing a matrix of all MAPP goals so that department heads can understand dependencies and inter-relationships to achieve performance targets. A similar process should be followed at the department level.

We hope this information is useful to you in preparing or updating your departmental strategic plans. Please let me know if you have any questions, or your staff may contact Martin Zimmerman at 213.974.1326 or [mzimmerman@ceo.lacounty.gov](mailto:mzimmerman@ceo.lacounty.gov).

WTF:ES  
MKZ:pg

c: Each Supervisor  
Executive Director, Economy and Efficiency Commission  
Administrative Deputies  
Strategic Plan Contacts